

Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NEA-10 /026 W

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O 041322Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 922

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 5853

STADIS//////////

FOR EAGLEBURGER AND CONNOLLY FROM SEELYE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP, APER, AEMR

SUBJECT: EMBASSY BEIRUT STAFFING

1. SUMMARY. I PROPOSE REDUCING THE SIZE OF EMBASSY COMPLEMENT, WHICH UPON MY ARRIVAL WAS 39, TO 34. BUT WITH THE NECESSARY ADDITION OF THREE MORE SECURITY OFFICERS OUR TOTAL BECOMES 37 ALTOGHETHER. THIS INVOLVES ELIMINATING 1) TWO SECRETARIAL SLOTS; 2) ONE CONSULAR OFFICER; AND 3) TWO MEMBERS OF THE DATT STAFF. POLITICAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS RENDER IT INADVISABLE TO CUT CONSULAR SECTION FURTHER, AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS PRECLUDE A FURTHER REDUCTION IN MARINES. FROM TIME TO TIME (E.G. SICKNESS OR LEAVE), WE WILL HAVE TO REPLY ON TDY'S FROM ATHENS. WE SUGGEST SHORTENING TOURS. END SUMMARY.

2. INTRODUCTION: AFTER ONE WEEK HERE HUNT AND I HAVE CAREFULLY RE-EVALUATED THE NEED FOR AMERICAN STAFFING AT BEIRUT AGAINST THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN BEIRUT 5127 DATED JUNE 15, 1976. THE SECURITY SITUATION, AS WELL AS THE LACK OF MUNICIAPL SERVICES (NO ELECTRICITY AND WATER SINCE JUNE 18, AND ALMOST NO TELEPHONE SERVICE), REQUIRES THAT WE MAKE IMMEDIATE ADJUSTMENTS IN THE SCOPE OF OUR OPERATION AND REDUCE THE STAFF AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. UNFORTUNATELY, AS WE CUT EVEN FURTHER INTO THE TRADITIONAL STAFFING, WE MUST ADD PEOPLE IN ORDER TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE SECURITY OPERATION. THIS TENDS TO DEFEAT OUR PURPOSES, BUT
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THERE IS LITTLE WE CAN DO ABOUT THIS UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. IN

ORDER TO HOLD DOWN OUR PROFILE AND YET MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE REPORTING AND PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES, WE MUST IGNORE TRADITIONAL AGENCY ROLES AND CONCENTRATE AVAILABLE RESOURCES ON ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS WHICH CAN BE REALISTICALLY PERFORMED IN THE CURRENT SITUATION. FOLLOWING ARE OUR PROPOSALS:

3. FRONT OFFICE: PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE (SEELYE); DCM (HUNT); TWO SECRETARIES (TEPAS/SHULTZ). THESE TWO SECRETARIES, PLUS MRS. O'BRIEN, WILL PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE ENTIRE EMBASSY OPERATION. THIS IS A MINIMUM STAFF AND WE MUST HAVE A TDYER ON STANDBY IN EITHER ATHENS OR DAMASCUS TO HELP US OUT IN CASE OF ILLNESS OR LEAVE. ASSUMING THAT THE DEPARTMENT AGREES WITH PROPOSALS DISCUSSED ABOVE, PERSONNEL MAY TAKE ACTION TO CANCEL SECRETARIES KATHLEEN MESSMORE AND REBECCA WATERS THOUGH ONE OF THEM COULD BE ASSIGNED TO A NEARBY POST FOR TDY SUPPORT.

4. COMBINED SUBSTANTIVE REPORTING: POLITICAL OFFICER (SIZER); POLITICAL OFFICER (MOLINEAUX); POLITICAL OFFICER (WATERMAN); E/C OFFICER (O'CONNEL); POLITICAL ASSISTANT (MRS. WATERMAN); DEFENSE ATTACHE (COL HUNT); (ASST. ARMY ATTACHE (LT. COL. HAMBRIC); PAO (ROSS); SECRETARY (MRS. O'CONNELL - CONTRACT WIFE).

A. POLITICAL: HARRY SIZER IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART IN JULY 1976. WE URGENTLY NEED ARABIC-SPEAKING OFFICER, PREFERABLY WITH PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN LEBANON, TO REPLACE HIM. WE ARE PLEASED WITH PROSPECTIVE ASSIGNMENT ON TDY OF NICK MURPHY FOR THIS JOB AND POSSIBILITY THAT GEORGE LANE WILL FOLLOW HIM. HOPE MURPHY CAN ARRIVE SOONEST, ESPECIALLY SINCE LAMBRAKIS DEPARTED TODAY.

B. DATT: I AGREE WITH MELOY'S RECOMMENDATION THAT WE REDUCE DATT OFFICE TO ONE MILITARY ATTACHE. HIS FUNCTION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE TO MAKE MILITARY CONTACTS, CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CONSOLIDATED REPORTING AND PROVIDE MILITARY EXPERTISE RE E&E. THIS WOULD MEAN ELIMINATING OTHER TWO DATT SLOTS AND ELIMINATING REGULAR DIA REPORTING REQUIREMENT. DEPEND ON DEPARTMENT TO LEAN ON DIA IN THIS REGARD. WE WILL PROVIDE NECESSARY CLERICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT. OTHER SUPPORT NEEDED COULD BE PROVIDED BY ATHENS ON TDY BASIS. CURRENT DATT, CO). HUNT, EXPECTS TO RETURN AND WILL LEAVE ABOUT AUGUST 15. IT CONFIDENTIAL

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IS IMPERATIVE THAT HIS REPLACEMENT SPEAK ARABIC. ACCORDINGLY, PROPOSE THAT ASSISTANT DATT, LT. COL. HAMBRIC, STAY ON AS HIS REPLACEMENT. UNDERSTAND HAMBRIC SCHEDULED TO BE MOVED TO AMMAN, BUT SUBMIT THIS EMBASSY HAS MORE CRITICAL NEED FOR ARABIC-SPEAKING DATT AT THIS TIME. POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO EXTEND HAMBRIC UNTIL APPROPRIATE SUBSTITUTE CAN BE FOUND.

C. USIS: CHRIS ROSS, THE ACTING PAO, IS SCHEDULED TO

LEAVE IN EARLY AUGUST. I AGREE WITH BEIRUT 5127 THAT ONE USIA OFFICER CAN COVER THIS IMPORTANT AREA BUT HE MUST BE A VERSTILE AND ENERGETIC OFFICER WITH GOOD LINGUISTIC ABILITY IN ARABIC. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT SINCE WALTER KOHL DOES NOT HAVE THE LANGUAGE ABILITY NEEDED, ANOTHER OFFICER MUST BE SELECTED FOR THIS KEY POSITION.

5. CONSULAR: CONSULAR OFFICER (BUDEIT); CONSULAR OFFICER (STAPLETON); CONSULAR OFFICER (METRINKO). I CONTINUE TO BE TORN ON THE ISSUE OF CUTTING OUT NIV AND IV VISAS. WHILE I HAVE BEEN TEMPTED TO REDUCE CONSULAR SECTION DRASTICALLY, AFTER MUCH THOUGHT AND DELIBERATION, I THINK WE HAD BETTER SNIP RATHER THAN CHOP -- UNLESS AND UNTIL THE AMERICAN CITIZEN POPULATION FALLS SHARPLY. AT MINIMUM, WE FEEL WE NEED TWO OFFICERS (BUDEIT AND STAPLETON) TO PERFORM VARIETY OF SERVICES FOR 1,000 AMERICAN CITIZENS IN WEST BEIRUT, INCLUDING E&E OPERATIONS. (THERE ARE 603 AMERICAN CITIZENS ON THE CHRISTIAN SIDE.) IT WOULD BE NICE TO BE ABLE TO MAKE DECISION TO ELIMINATE ALL VISA SERVICES HERE, AS HAVE BRITISH AND GERMANS, BUT I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT SUBSTANTIAL LEBANESE-AMERICAN TIES, BOTH BLOOD AND POLITICAL, ARGUE IN FAVOR OF A LEAST CONTINUING TO ISSUE OFFICAL AND IMMIGRANT VISAS -- STILL A SUBSTANTIAL OPERATION. THIS WE CAN DO IF WE RETAIN A THIRD CONSULAR OFFICER. I WOULD LIKE TO TRANSFER NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS TO NEARBY POSTS AND HAVE EMERGENCY SERVICES OF ONE VISA OFFICER IN ATHENS TO CT AS RELIEF FOR US AS REQUIRED. THUS, WE PLAN TO CUT CONSULAR SECTION FROM FOUR TO THREE OFFICERS. CONSULAR OFFICER LOUIS RUSSEL HAS RECENTLY EXPERIENCED A BACK PROBLEM, WHICH SOME SAY MAY BE EXACERBATED BY THE NEED TO RUN UP AND DOWN MANY FLIGHTS OF STAIRS (WHICH HAPPENS, HOWEVER, TO BE GREAT FOR ME). FURTHERMORE, HE IS DUE VISITATION LEAVE IN SEPTEMBER AND HOME LEAVE IN DECEMBER. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD KEEP HIM HERE UNTIL

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METRINKO ARRIVES, AND THEN LET HIM TAKE LEAVE BEFORE TRANSFER. ALTERNATIVELY, HE COULD RETURN TEMPORARILY TO ATHENS FOR RELIEF TDY DUTY AS REQUIRED BY US. CONSULAR OFFICER JOHN COOPER WILL, THEREFOERE, NOT BE NEEDED IN BEIRUT AND KARLA SMITH CAN DEPART AS SOON AS RUSSELL RETURNS TO WORK OR WHEN METRINKO ARRIVES.

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6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECURITY: ADMIN COUNSELOR (POWELL); B&F OFFICER (CUNNINGHAM/MCELHOE); GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER (WALSH/WEBER); REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER (O'BRIEN); THREE SY PROTECTIVE OFFICERS ON TDY; TEN MARINE GUARDS. ADMINISTRATIVE COUNSELOR JOHN POWELL HAS INDICATED THAT HE PLANS TO RETIRE ABOUT OCT 1. THIS IS, OF COURSE, A KEY POSITION AND ONE WHICH MUST BE KEPT FILLED. WE RECOMMEND A GOOD EXPERIENCED FSO 3 OR 4 WHO COULD ARRIVE BEIRUT ON OR ABOUT SEPT 1 SO THAT HE CAN BE FULLY BRIEFED ON COMPLEX LOGISTICS SERVICES NECESSARY AT THIS TIME. IN ADDITION THE REPLACEMENT MUST BE PREPARED TO TAKE OVER MANY IMPORTANT POST ADMINISTRATION PROBLEMS SUCH AS LEASING PROGRAM, LOCAL EMPLOYEE ADMINISTRATION, CHANCERY CONSTRUCTION, ETC., IF AND WHEN THE SITUATION IMPROVES. THE GENERAL SERVICES POSITION IS TEMPORARILY FILLED BY TDYER WALSH. WE HOPE THAT WEBER CAN ARRIVE TO FILL THIS POSITION BY AUGUST 1 AS SCHEDULED. WHEN WEBER ARRIVES, WE WOULD PROPOSE THAT WALSH WOULD TEMPORARILY FILL THE B&F POSITION UNTIL MCELHOE ARRIVES ON OR ABOUT OCTOBER 1. WE CURRENTLY HAVE TWO PROTECTIVE SECURITY OFFICERS ON TDY (ROBINSON AND MCCARTHY) AND THEY ARE REQUESTING A THIRD OFFICER TO SELECT AND TRAIN EMBASSY DRIVERS IN THE NEW SECURITY PROCEDURES. THESE POSITIONS CAN BE FILLED BY TDYERS FROM SY. IN ADDITION, WE ARE LISTING 10 MARINES SINCE SY HAS DETERMINED THAT A POST SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AT MY APARTMENT SINCE I WILL BE USING IT TO A CERTAIN EXTENT.

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7. COMMUNICATIONS: I CONCUR THAT THREE TCU OFFICERS AND TWO C&R OFFICERS WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKLOAD FOR THE TIME BEING. I THEREFORE PROPOSE THE

FOLLOWING STAFFING: C&R OFFICER (HALLMAN); C&R OFFICER (DAVIS; TCU OFFICER (KRAMER); TCU OFFICER (LONG); TCU OFFICER (PENA - TDY). WE PROPOSE TO SEND HALLMAN ON 18DAY VISITATION LEAVE TOMORROW. WHEN HE RETURNS, GRAHAM WILL DEPART AND HALLMAN AND DAVIS WILL REMAIN IN BEIRUT. ALSTON SCHEDULED VICE GRAHAM SHOULD GO TO ATHENS WHERE HE COULD SERVE AS THE TDY RELIEF OFFICER FOR BEIRUT. RICHARD JOHNSON'S ASSIGNMENT AS C&R OFFICER WITH OCTOBER ETA CAN BE CANCELLED.

8. CONCLUSION: WHAT THIS ADDS UP TO IS A COMPLEMENT OF 37, REFLECTING AN INITIAL CUTBACK OF FIVE SLOTS, COMPENSATED FOR BY THE NECESSITY OF ADDING THREE ADDITIONAL SECURITY OFFICERS. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT RECOMMENDED STAFFING FOR OUR REPORTING SECTION IS AS SMALL AS WE CAN MAKE IT, GIVEN THE CURRENT IMPORTANCE OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION HERE. THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN IMPOSED ON US BY EXISTING EMERGENCY CONDITIONS NECESSITATES MORE MANAGING OF HOUSEKEEPING CHORES AND THEREFORE PERMITS NO FURTHER REDUCTION IN ALREADY LEAN ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. SINCE WE HAVE NO PADDING WHATSOEVER, WE WILL AS ALREADY INDICATED, NEED TDY PITCH-HITTING FROM TIME TO TIME. THIS WOULD INCLUDE, IN ADDITION TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES OF A CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY, THOSE OF A C&R OFFICER. I SUGGEST THAT WE USE TDY ON A LIBERAL BASIS AND THAT WE REDUCE LENGTH OF TOURS, WHERE DESIRABLE. UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS, I BELIEVE, NO NON-SUBSTANTIVE OFFICERS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO SPEND MORE THAN SIX MONTHS HERE; AND NO SUBSTANTIVE OFFICER MORE THAN A YEAR. RE THE LATTER, IF WE BRING IN ARABISTS, CONTINUITY SHOULD BE LESS OF A PROBLEM. THERE MAY BE SOME WHO ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT LONGER TOURS AND WE WELCOME THEM. BUT IF SHORTER TOURS ARE NEEDED IN ORDER TO ATTRACT GOOD PEOPLE PREPARED TO LIVE AND WORK UNDER TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES, THEN LET'S DO SO. FINALLY, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO LET ANY EMPLOYEE DEPART BEIRUT QUICKLY WHEN HE OR SHE HAS HAD IT "UP TO HERE," REGARDLESS OF ASSIGNMENT OR TOUR OF DUTY POLICY. THIS IS NOT THE KIND OF PLACE WHERE PEOPLE SHOULD BC435-8,3\$ *94 LONG PERIODS AWAITING REPLACEMENT. WORKING LONG HOURS, CONFIDENTIAL

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SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, UNDER TENSION AND PRESSURE, COOPED UP, WITH SHELLS DROPPING ALL OVER THE PLACE AND INDISCRIMINATE SHOOTING A COMMONPLACE, THIS EMBASSY'S STAFF DESERVES EVERY BREAK -- AND IN MY WEEK'S TENURE HERE I CAN TELL YOU THAT, DESPITE EVERYTHING, THEY ARE BEARING UP NOBLY. SEELYE

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